

Remarks/Arguments:

This is a reply to the office action of July 18.

Claims 1, 13 and 21 have been amended above.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102

The Examiner is alleging that the subject-matter of claims 1 to 10, 12 to 18 and 20 is anticipated by the disclosure of Kara (US-2005/0071297).

This is not the case. Nevertheless, in the interests of expediency, claims 1 and 13 are being amended so as more clearly to distinguish over the disclosure of Kara, in requiring that the selection of data items is *from within* the depicted postage indicium.

Claims 1 and 13 now require *inter alia* the displaying of a depiction of a postage indicium to be printed on a mail item, which includes a plurality of data items which are modifiable by a user, and more particularly provides for the selection of any one of the data items from within the depicted postage indicium, in particular by a screen pointing device, such as a mouse, a tracker ball, a touch pad or a touch screen.

In the system and method of Kara, the Examiner apparently considers the display 811, which depicts a postage indicium, and the postage indicia box 816 to define together the depicted postage indicium of claims 1 and 13.

This is manifestly not the case. The postage indicia box 816 would never be printed on a mail item, and represents means, separate of the postage indicium depicted in the display 811, by which the configuration of the depicted postage indicium can be altered.

The system and method of Kara do not include any means by which data items can be selected from within a depicted postage indicium, in the manner required by claims 1 and 13. In marked contrast, in the system and method of Kara, the modifiable items of the postage indicium depicted in the display 811 can only be modified by selection from elements which are separate from and do not form part of a depicted postage indicium.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the subject-matter of claims 1 and 13 is patentably distinguished from the disclosure of Kara.

As regards the dependent claims (claims 2 to 10, 12, 14 to 18 and 20), it is submitted that these claims are allowable, in being dependent upon allowable independent claims (claims 1 and 13).

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103

Claims 11 and 19

The Examiner is alleging that the subject-matter of claims 11 and 19 is unpatentable over the disclosure of Kara.

This is not the case. These claims are allowable, in being dependent upon allowable independent claims (claims 1 and 13).

Claims 21 and 27

The Examiner is alleging that the subject-matter of claims 21 and 27 is unpatentable over the disclosure of Heiden (US-5710707).

This is not the case. Nevertheless, in the interests of expediency, claims 21 and 27 are being amended so as more clearly to distinguish over the disclosure of Heiden, in requiring the display of *a message status screen* which includes message areas corresponding to each transmitted message.

Claims 21 and 27 now require *inter alia* the transmission of messages relating to batches of mail to a remote data center, the receipt of messages from the remote data center as an acknowledgement in reply to each transmitted message, and the displaying of a message status screen which includes message areas corresponding to each transmitted message, where the message areas have a first visual appearance on transmission of the respective messages to the remote data center and a second, different visual appearance on receipt of the respective messages from the remote data center.

In Heiden, postage metering systems (10), which each comprise a primary accounting apparatus (12) and a printing apparatus (13), have access to a secondary accounting apparatus (520) in the event of a critical malfunction to the primary accounting apparatus (12).

It is noted that, in communication between the printing apparatus (13) and the secondary accounting apparatus (520), messages are transmitted to the printing apparatus (13) for display by the computer display (136) thereof, including a message of acknowledgement [column 13, lines 12 to 22] and a funds-needed message [column 13, lines 52 to 60].

However, Heiden makes no suggestion of the displaying of a message status screen which includes message areas corresponding to each transmitted message, in the manner as now required by claims 21 and 27.

Heiden does not require such a message status screen, as the communication between the printing apparatus (13) and the secondary accounting apparatus (520) occurs only when there is a critical malfunction of the primary accounting apparatus (12), and this communication relates only to a single batch of mail. There is no requirement to track the preparation of multiple batches of mail, in the manner of claims 21 and 27.

Furthermore, Heiden makes no suggestion of the provision of message areas within a message status screen, where the message areas have a first visual appearance on transmission of the respective messages to the secondary accounting apparatus (520) and a second, different visual appearance on receipt of the respective messages from the secondary accounting apparatus (520).

As discussed above, Heiden discloses only the display of separate, discrete messages at the computer display (136) of the printing apparatus (13). There is no suggestion of a message status screen which includes message areas which have a different visual appearance in dependence upon the message status.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the subject-matter of claims 21 and 27 is patentably distinguished from the disclosure of Heiden.

Claims 22 and 28

The Examiner is alleging that the subject-matter of claims 22 and 28 is unpatentable over the disclosure of Heiden in view of Kara (US-5812991).

This rejection is traversed. These claims are deemed allowable, inasmuch as they depend from allowable independent claims (claims 21 and 27).

Claims 23 to 26 and 29 to 32

The Examiner is alleging that the subject-matter of claims 23 to 26 and 29 to 32 is unpatentable over the disclosure of Heiden in view of Mozdzer *et al* (US-2005/0010524).

This rejection is traversed. These claims are deemed allowable, in being dependent upon allowable independent claims (claims 21 and 27).

Respectfully submitted,

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